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(56) Documents cited

GB 0727054	GB 0480612
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GB 0629334	US 3784046

(58) Field of search
A6H
H1A
B8P

Fig. 4

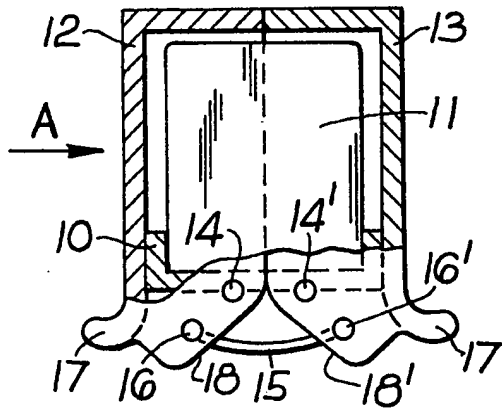


Fig. 1

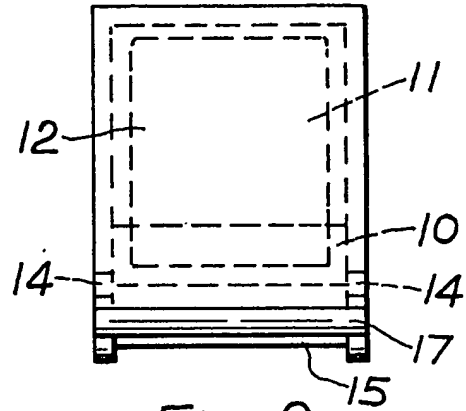


Fig. 2

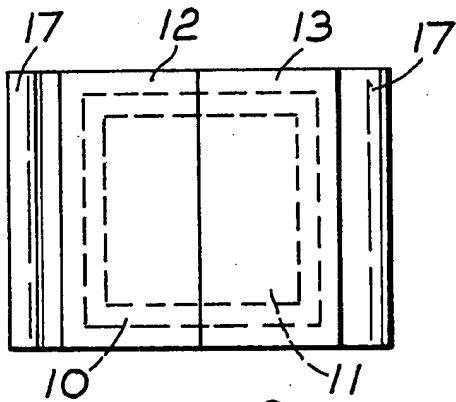


Fig. 3

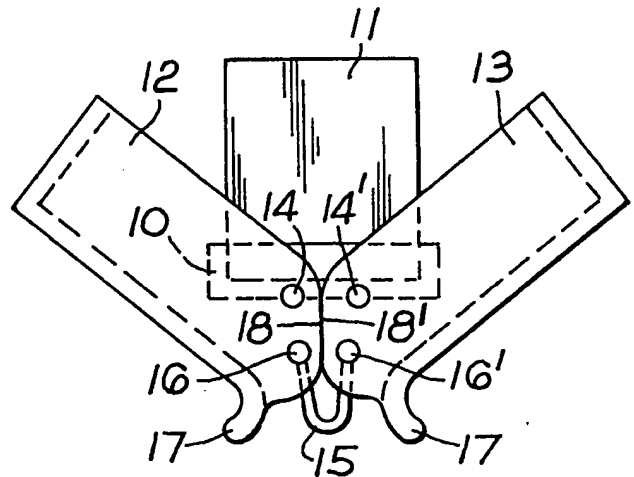


Fig. 4

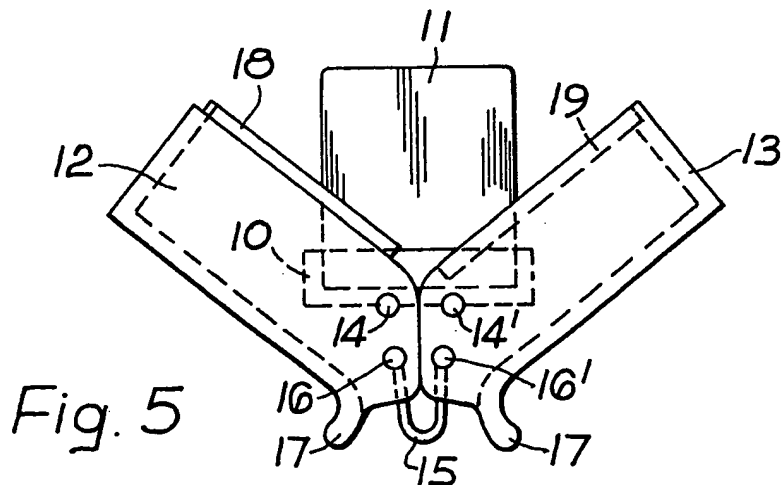


Fig. 5

SPECIFICATION

Container

5 This invention concerns a container, particularly but not exclusively a container for billiard chalk.

Billiard chalk is used for coating the tips of billiard cues used in playing billiards, snooker, pool and other similar games.

10 It is important that chalk is readily to hand at all times during a game so that it can be used at frequent intervals. Indeed, professionals advise that the cue should be chalked prior to every shot. The continued availability of the chalk is most conveniently achieved by it being retained in a pocket of each player. However, this spoils the clothing as the chalk rubs off on the relevant pocket lining.

At present, there are no convenient billiard chalk holders or containers on the market which can be carried in a pocket of a player and give quick and easy access to the chalk while protecting the pocket lining by preventing the rubbing of the surface of the chalk thereagainst. It is an object of the present invention to provide a container which will fulfil these requirements.

With this object in view the present invention provides a container comprising a base in the form of a plate or an open receptacle and two half-lids which are symmetrically attached to the base in face to face relationship with each other and which are capable of being pivoted relative to the base between an open position exposing any material located on or in the base and a closed position covering such material, by operation of manual engagement means, the two half-lids being connected to each other by resilient means which biases the half-lids into the closed position.

The base is preferably in the form of a tray with a rim, the tray being of such dimensions that the desired material, such as a block of billiard chalk, can be easily pushed into same and retained by friction within the rim. Alternatively, the material can be fixed to the tray, or to any other form of base, such as a plate or another open receptacle, by adhesive.

The resilient means is preferably in the form of a strip of plastics sheet of appropriate quality which is pivotally connected, at each end, to the respective half-lids.

50 The invention will be described further, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a side view, partially in cross-section, of a practical embodiment of the container of the invention in the form of a billiard chalk holder in the closed position;

Figure 2 is an end view of the same container in the direction of the arrow A in *Figure 1*;

Figure 3 is a plan view of the container of *Figure 1*;

Figure 4 is a side view of the container of *Figure 1* in the open position; and

Figure 5 is a side view of a modified embodiment of the container of the invention in the form of a billiard chalk holder, also

Referring firstly to *Figures 1* to *4*, a first embodiment of the container of the invention in the form of a billiard chalk holder comprises a base in the form of a tray 10 and two identical half-lids 12 and 13. The half-lids 12, 13 are mutually facing and are symmetrically pivotally connected to the tray 10 by respective pegs 14, 14' attached to each side of the tray 10. Resilient means in the form of a strip of plastics material 15 connects the two half-lids 12, 13 and is pivotally attached to each half-lid 12, 13 by transverse rods 16, 16' at the respective ends of the strip 15 locating in holes in the half-lids 12, 13. A block of billiard chalk 11 is shown inserted into the tray 10 and firmly held within its rim.

Each half-lid 12, 13 is formed generally as an open receptacle, the respective open sides thereof being in face to face relationship with each other. At the lower edge of each half-lid 12, 13 an inclined surface 18, 18' is provided, with an angle of approximately 100° existing between these surfaces 18, 18' when the upper edges of the half-lids 12, 13 are in contact as shown in *Figure 1*. Each half-lid 12, 13 also has manual engagement means in the form of a ridge 17 projecting from that side of the respective half-lid 12 or 13 which is remote from the other half-lid 13 or 12.

Normally the container is in the condition illustrated in *Figure 1* with the half-lids 12, 13 biased into their closed position by the resilient plastics strip 15. In this condition the upper edges of the half-lids 12, 13 contact each other, as mentioned above, so as to form a box-like cover enclosing the billiard chalk 11.

When the projections 17 are gripped by the finger and thumb of a user's hand and pinched together so to speak, the two half-lids 12, 13 swivel outwardly, as shown in *Figure 4*. The previously contacting upper edges of the half-lids 12, 13 move apart and expose the chalk 11 so that it can be applied to the end of the cue, (not shown). Simultaneously the inclined surfaces 18, 18' of the half-lids 12, 13 come into contact with each other and act as mutual stops. The resilient strip 15 simply bend or loops downwards under the applied pressure. When this pressure is released, the strip 15 springs back to its original slightly curved position and causes the upper edges of the two half-lids 12, 13 to close together again and the inclined surface 18, 18' to move apart. In this way the chalk 11 cannot rub off on a pocket lining since it is always covered by the half-lids 12, 13 when the container is not specifically opened by manual pressure.

In the modified embodiment illustrated in *Figure 5*, the half-lids 12, 13 are not identical in shape. An additional inner ledge 18 is provided on one of the half-lids 12 to fit into a recess 19 inside the other half-lid 13 in the closed position. This prevents any chalk dust leaving the housing formed by the base 10 and the half-lids 12, 13.

It should be understood that the foregoing is illustrative and not limitative of the scope of the invention and many variations are possible. For example, the ridges 17 forming the engagement means may be ribbed or grooved to facilitate gripping. The pivotal connections between the half-

lids 12, 13 and the base 10 and the half-lids 12, 13 and the resilient means 15 may be formed in some other manner. Also, the shape of the half-lids 12, 13 may vary as the inclined surfaces, in the closed position, may be disposed at any appropriate angle to each other from a few degrees to almost 180° or the half-lids may be part spherical in shape or differ in some other way from the illustrated examples. Of course, as mentioned previously, the half-lids need not be equal in shape or size. Furthermore, in place of a tray another form of open receptacle, or a simple plate may be used for holding or attachment of the chalk.

Finally, the use of the container is not confined to holding billiard chalk and it may be used to hold cosmetics, such as eyeshadow or blocks of perfume or cologne, or colouring matter of various sorts, or any other suitable object or material.

20 CLAIMS

1. A container comprising a base in the form of a plate or an open receptacle and two half-lids which are symmetrically attached to the base in face to face relationship with each other and which are capable of being pivoted relative to the base between an open position exposing any material located on or in the base and a closed position covering such material by operation of manual engagement means, the two half-lids being connected to each other by resilient means which biases the half-lids into the closed position.

2. A container as claimed in claim 1 wherein the base is in the form of a tray with a rim, the tray being of such dimensions that a block of material can be easily pushed into same and retained by friction within the rim.

3. A container as claimed in claim 1 or 2 wherein the resilient means comprises a strip of plastics sheet pivotally connected to each of the half-lids.

4. A container as claimed in claim 1, 2 or 3 wherein the manual engagement means comprises projecting ridges on each of the half-lids.

5. A container substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to and as illustrated in Figures 1 to 4, or Figure 5 of the accompanying drawing.

Amendments to the claims have been filed, and have the following effect:-

(a) Claims 1, 3 and 4 above have been deleted or textually amended.

(b) New or textually amended claims have been filed as follows:-

(c) Claims 5 above have been re-numbered as 6 and their appendancies corrected.

1. A container comprising a base in the form of a plate or an open receptacle and two half-lids which are symmetrically and pivotally connected to the base in face to face relationship with each other and are capable of being pivoted relative to the base between an open position exposing any material located on or in the base and a closed po-

sition covering such material, the two half-lids being connected to each other by a resilient strip of material which biases the half-lids into the closed position and being pivotable into the open position by manual application of pressure to draw together lower parts of the respective half-lids.

3. A container as claimed in claim 1 or 2 wherein the resilient strip is in the form of a plastics sheet pivotally connected to each of the half-lids.

4. A container as claimed in claim 1, 2 or 3 wherein the resilient strip bends or loops downwards upon application of pressure to draw together the lower parts of the respective half-lids.

5. A container as claimed in any preceding claim wherein projecting ridges are provided on the respective half-lids for manual engagement.

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